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571 613 of closer common interests. It is related to the *yizug* as the *yizug* is to the clan. At the limit it marks off the widest lineage within which there is a strong feeling of moral solidarity, a tendency for corporate unity to prevail in all circumstances, and a strong sense of undivided common interests. Beyond this range, in the zone of section relations and in that of clanship, corporate unity and solidarity tend to be a function of politico-ritual interdependence and of a balance between the competitive interests and the obligatory bonds of reciprocity of the major segments of the clan.

582 613 At Tongo the widest range of the *dug* in this definitive sense is a lineage segment of the order of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. This is constantly shown in economic life, as when a man invites his neighbours to a collective hoeing party or to help him build a new house. Then all the members of his widest *dug* feel bound to turn out, but not members of other *dugət* of the same section. Members of other sections will not be asked to come at all, and if one or two turn out it will be because they have personal ties of matrilateral kinship with the man issuing the invitation. It appears similarly in all other concerns of the individual which require corporate support. It is shown in the incidence of marriage prohibitions. Tallensi may not, according to strict rule, marry cognatic kin of any degree whatsoever. A man may not marry a daughter of his maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yiri*). But the restriction is limited to his mother's widest paternal *dug*. Thus a man whose mother belongs to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Təŋ-Puhug would not be allowed to marry another daughter of this *dug*, but he can—and innumerable cases show that this often happens—marry a daughter of another *dug* of Puhug.

613 [578] Dissension occurs between segments of such a *dug* now and then, but this arouses severe reprobation. Members of the *dug* feel it as a direct threat to their well-being, in a way that they do not feel conflict between such *dugət* to be; they feel it as verging on the sinful, challenging the wrath of the ancestor spirits, whereas conflict between such *dugət* or between sections, though morally reprehensible, is not mystically dangerous. Within this *dug* sexual relations between a member and the wife of one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory brother and sister meet with strong censure. Beyond this range sexual relations between a man and the wife of a clansman are merely adulterous, a violation of clan solidarity, not a sin; and intercourse with a clan sister is not censured. These distinctions go back to one fundamental principle. The wide *dug* marks the widest range within which differences of generation and birth order are recognized for jural and ritual purposes; beyond that range these differences are not recognized. The lower limit of the *dug* corresponds to a segment of about the order of Doohraan yidɛm. This narrow *dug* frequently forms the core of an expanded family; it determines the widest field within which domestic relations prevail. Its members have differentiated person-to-person relations, based on the recognition of generation differences and proxy-parenthood, as well as corporate lineage relations. Their moral bonds are correspondingly stronger than in the wide *dug*, though of the same kind. Within this unit sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and

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606 611 602 this son-in-law from his other sons-in-law, both because this young man was the husband of his own daughter, whereas the others were the husbands of his dead brothers' daughters, and because this son-in-law was as devoted to him as his own sons. Tallensi often say that a man's own children are virtually his *saarət*, though not technically so. There is no confusion in the native mind about these usages of the concept of *soog*; they understand and explain clearly that these are metaphorical usages.

835 The feeling of close, personal intimacy in the relationship of uterine kin is best brought out in the native attitude about sexual relations between *saarət*. It is incestuous if the couple know they are *saarət*, however distant their uterine connexion. It is like incest between own brother and sister, and is viewed in the same way as the latter. Tallensi think of it with disgust rather than horror. Sexual desire for a known *soog* relative is so utterly inconsistent with the general attitude of uterine kin towards each other that it is unthinkable in a decent person. It is a taboo (*kihər*) which normal people take for granted. There are no ritual or jural sanctions against incest with a *soog*, and Tallensi would say that there is no need for them. At no point are the relations of uterine kin subject to sanctions; 'I will not refuse him, I will not deny him anything', says the native of a *soog*, thinking of this as an axiomatic feature of *soog* kinship.

582 602 [586] Marriage between *saarət* is, of course, forbidden, and the elders of the lineages concerned would never allow it if the couple are known to be uterine kin. But sometimes, owing to the devious ramifications of uterine kinship, a married couple discover that they are distant *saarət*. If there are no children, or the elders of the girl's lineage want a pretext for taking her from her husband, they might insist on the dissolution of the marriage. If a child has been born, or the couple refuse to part for any other reason, their kinship must be ritually severed. The rite is very simple. The essential act consists of the husband and wife grasping a calabash with one hand each and wrenching it in halves. This symbolizes the splitting (*bɔk*) of their kinship.

602 It is not uncommon for a man to have one or more *saarət* (other than his siblings) among the members of his own clan. They may be the sons of one mother by different fathers, or the sons of sisters, or of more distantly related uterine kinswomen who married into the same clan. In such cases one can see how the loyalties based on uterine kinship are distinguished from the ties of lineage membership. Yikpɛmdaan and Tinta'alɔm of Tɔŋ-Kuorəg, the two senior elders of Kuorəg section, are *saarət*, but members of different segments of the section. Tinta'alɔm's children and brothers' children speak of Yikpɛmdaan as their father (*ba*); Yikpɛmdaan and Tinta'alɔm speak of each other as brothers, since their mothers were full sisters. Their mutual affection and attachment, going back to the childhood of Yikpɛmdaan, when he lived for a time with Tinta'alɔm, are well known. Tinta'alɔm

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606 578 ter-in-law towards one another, and the terminology of address associated with them, put a protective fence between parents-in-law and daughter-in-law. 'My mother', or 'my father', in this context means 'a person to whom I owe punctilious respect'. The relation is one of reciprocal respect, because it is based on something in the nature of a contract. The daughter-in-law's attitude is an exaggeration of one aspect of filial respect towards the parents. This aspect is more prominent in kinship relations outside the focal field and in ceremonial relations patterned on, but structurally different from, true parent-child relations, than in the latter. It is reminiscent of the behaviour of his clansmen to a chief or tendaana on formal occasions, when his symbolic position as father (*ba*) of the clan is most apparent.

Naturally the barrier between father-in-law and daughter-in-law is stricter than between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law owing to the difference of sex, though it is not obvious to an outsider. Once she is accepted, a man usually treats his daughter-in-law with kindness and affability. In public he treats her with a familiar friendliness, in the same way as if she were his daughter. But whereas he scolds his daughter without hesitation, he does not scold or criticize his daughter-in-law directly. It would offend and hurt her, and upset their amicable relations. The barrier between them—and this applies in a lesser degree to the mother-in-law too—can be maintained only on the basis of mutual courtesy and affability. Where the barrier is most sharply emphasized is not in their public intercourse but in their relations as members of opposite sexes. For a man to have sexual relations with, or even sit on the same mat as, his daughter-in-law is a sin of the first magnitude. '*Dɛn n-kih pam!* (that is an extreme taboo)', say the natives, with every sign of repugnance. It is a sin that can never be wholly atoned for. Sooner or later the culprits will be slain by the ancestor spirits; for, like incest with a father's wife of which it is the counterpart, it destroys irreparably the moral and religious bonds of father and son. I heard of an old man who died some years ago who used to have his daughters-in-law sit on his lap, and 'play' with them. This, my informants said scoffingly, was just the ill manners of an old dotard. But Gunyaam's seduction of his daughter-in-law was revealed to me with bated breath. It was no wonder, my informant said, that he died soon after, and that misfortunes crowded on his family.

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The relations of daughter-in-law to parents-in-law are well summed up in the statement always made by Tallensi if they are asked for an explanation of the terminology of address used between these relatives. They say: 'We stand in awe of them (parents-in-law or daughters-in-law)', (*ti zootbanɛ*, lit. 'we fear them').[1]

601 [1] This terminology of address is of considerable theoretical interest. Rattray (op. cit., p. 6) attributes the custom of addressing a daughter-in-law as 'mother' (customary also amongst the Garisi, Namnam, and other peoples adjacent to

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The Relationship of Husband and Wife

The closest bonds a woman has with any member of the family into which she marries are her bonds with her husband. Habit, economic co-operation, and the jural authority of husband over wife bring them closer and closer together as the years pass. But these mutual interests are insufficient by themselves. The true cement of their union is the birth of children. Children give the union its *raison d'être*. They become the focus of the common interests, common pride, and common devotion of the partners, without which their economic co-operation or the other satisfactions they get from marriage would be meaningless. As we have already seen, one thing Tallensi never tire of stressing is that the object of marriage is to have children. When she has borne two or three living children to him a woman will be most unwilling to leave her husband, however hard her life with him may be.

The arrival of children not only forges closer the emotional bonds of husband and wife, but it also unites them socially in a firmer compact.

the Tallensi) to the 'horror of a father having intercourse with a son's wife'. He does not take into account the fact that mother-in-law and daughter-in-law also address each other reciprocally as 'mother'. As is mentioned above, the Tallensi themselves have no complete explanation for this usage, and this applies to the neighbouring 'tribes'. Many informants amplified the conventional formula 'We fear them' by pointing out that it was a degree of respect similar to that due to a mother. As we shall see later, the respect due to one's mother is almost a sacrosanct norm. The natives do not explicitly associate the mode of address with the horror of incest between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, but they do stress the latter in discussing the relationship of father-in-law and daughter-in-law. We shall see later that incest with a daughter-in-law is coupled with incest with one's mother as among the most serious kinship sins conceivable to the Tallensi. Rattray's inference, therefore, probably isolates one element in the usage, but it is a suppressed element. The incest barrier is a factor of importance in the relations of father-in-law and daughter-in-law in very many patrilineal African societies. Logically, however, it would seem to be more in keeping with the relationship of parent-in-law and daughter-in-law for the former to address the latter as his or her daughter, as is customary in a number of African societies. Here, however, a combination of circumstances arising out of the lineage principle comes into the picture. A daughter-in-law is not under her parents-in-law's authority and control in the same sense as their daughter is. She is not a substitute daughter, but their son's wife and a potential mother of their grandchildren of the same lineage. She is a stranger in theory, standing outside the scheme of lineage loyalties and sanctions, yet at the same time the one person on whom the whole future of the lineage depends. Again no Tallensi ever suggested that a daughter-in-law is called 'mother' by her parents-in-law because she is a future mother of lineage members. It is rather her ambiguous position as a stranger tied to the lineage that is uppermost in their thought. Her being addressed as 'mother' by her parents-in-law may be a means of stressing this and of over-emphasizing the respect due to her from them, the usage being a metaphoric derivation from the mode of address used to one's mother and, by extension, in an honorific sense to old women in general. In short, this usage aptly symbolizes the tensions in the relations of parents-in-law and daughter-in-law, in respect to which the latter is almost on an equal footing with the former.

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that prenuptial love affairs between adolescents have diminished since the coming of the white man, owing to increasing scarcity of marriageable girls and the consequent decline in the age of marriage for them. Premarital motherhood, on the other hand, they regard with a certain amount of scorn. It suggests a weakness of character, but it is not so disgraceful as to spoil the girl's chances of marriage.

The norms of kinship and marriage indirectly lead to prenuptial love affairs and adultery occurring mostly between distantly related members of the same clan. Such amours, whether casual or lasting, are not considered to be incestuous. That the parties are members of the same clan does not arouse public disapprobation, nor does it bring down ritual penalties on their heads or set jural sanctions in motion against them. This makes it seem the more inappropriate to pick out the sexual tie as the corner-stone of marriage. For, as we have previously indicated, the social relations of affinity arising out of marriage are always sharply contrasted with those of kinship; and if sex relations are the essential thing in marriage they must surely be incompatible with kinship. The paradox is resolved if we take into account certain principles of kinship that will be elucidated later. It is of interest here as evidence of the distinction, characteristic of Tale ideas about sex, which the natives draw clearly between sexual relations as a mode of sensual gratification and sexual intercourse in marriage.

Tallensi often cite the maxim 'Copulation and marriage are not the same thing (*Pɛn nyɛbɔg ni pɔɣadir, ba ka bu kɔ'la*)'. But they also say, 'We marry for the sake of copulation'; always adding, however, 'and for the sake of children'. The sexual motive, in short, is considered to be fundamental to marriage, both for men and for women; but it is fundamental as the means to the supreme end of marriage, the procreation of children.

The Economic and Property Relations of Spouses

The significance of sex in marriage will be clearer if we consider first the economic and property relations of husband and wife. By marriage a woman is transferred from her father's authority to that of her husband, and, consequently, to that of anyone under whose authority he comes. Explaining this, Tallensi say, 'A man owns (*so*) his wife. Has he not bought (*da*) her?' This does not mean that a wife is regarded as a chattel. In fact no man would dare to say in his wife's presence that he bought her, except in jest, in an outburst of violent anger, or deliberately to insult her. The concept 'own' here means that a man has authority over and is responsible for his wife. He 'owns' her working power, in the first place. She must perform the indispensable domestic tasks connected with the preparation of food for the household, the provision of water-supplies, the care of the home and of the children, and so forth. She must help him with the sowing and the harvesting of his crops,

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His family had had a windfall of two daughters in half a generation and that meant eight cows.

Yet the Tallensi believe emphatically that a girl can only realize her womanhood to the full by bearing legitimate children. For this she must marry; and marriage means having only one husband at a time. It is as her husband's sexual mate that a woman is most sharply separated from her natal family; it is her husband's exclusive rights over her reproductive powers that definitively makes them husband and wife.

This proposition applies also to the husband's field of social relations. Within the region of family and kinship ties where generation differences are socially recognized, sexual relations may occur only between married partners. Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman of the family who is not his wife is incest. The Tallensi have no name for this act. They say, simply, 'It is tabooed (*de kihme*)'; and they look on it with unanimous revulsion. Translating their ideas into our cultural idiom, we should say that they regard any form of incest as an unnatural act.[1]

Incest, to a Talena, includes sex relations with a sister or daughter, that is, a woman of one's own lineage: with a mother, the wife of one's own or classificatory father; with a brother's wife; and with a son's wife. Such acts of misconduct are considered incestuous if they occur within the limits of the expanded family—that is, the family group based on the inner lineage (the narrow *dug*). The natives stress this, putting the emphasis on the fact that the narrow *dug* is the smallest lineage segment with a common ancestor shrine (*bɔɣar*). Such acts are, also, often regarded as incestuous within the limits of the family cluster based on the medial lineage, particularly if this lineage has a narrow span.

Incest occurs occasionally in every Tale community. Such an act soon leaks out, and is remembered with contempt for many years. I have discussed such cases with many informants, and was able, also, to witness the public reaction to two cases that occurred during my field work.[2]

There are no penal sanctions against any form of incest, nor are the culprits believed to be subject to automatic mystical retribution. Incest is so incompatible with the pattern of co-operation and the structure of disciplinary and affective relations in the family that this itself serves to banish it from the field of family relationships. Though incest taboos are never deliberately inculcated, the habits, attitudes, and organization of family life (to put the native expressions into sociological language) create internal barriers against incest, in the normal person. This applies particularly to incest with a sister or daughter, whether it is a single impulsive act or a more lasting liaison. Tallensi explain that a normal

[1] A preliminary analysis of this subject was given in my paper, 'Kinship, Incest, and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King: Essays presented to R. R. Marett*, 1936.

[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

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593 613 [587] replenish the lineage. They are under the ritual and jural authority of his own or proxy father, during the latter's lifetime, and may pass into the ritual and jural custody of one of his 'brothers' on his death. If he dies, a 'brother' will have the first and strongest claim to his widow's hand. Yet these are the men who must most rigorously respect his exclusive sexual rights over his wife and most staunchly defend them against all others. Men of the same nuclear lineage can substitute for one another in all relationships of filiation; for these are the relationships that constitute them a corporate unit. They dare not usurp one another's role in the marital relationship; this would bring them into competition with one another. The sexual bond is the heart of the unique person-to-person aspect of marriage, and sexual competition the negation of the tie of common descent and the greatest source of inter-personal and inter-group conflict. Lineage and clan have a corporate interest in a wife of any member of the unit as the mother of future members of the group, and in her offspring. But no member of the unit may have a personal sexual interest in her while her husband is alive.

613 ●835 577 We can see, now, why sexual relations with a sister or a daughter are so much less reprehensible than incest with a wife of the lineage. Incest with a sister or daughter does not destroy the solidarity of the males of the nuclear lineage for it does not imply rivalry between them. She belongs to all of them equally by birth; she is genealogically and socially identified with them; she and they already have defined rights and duties and sentiments of attachment to one another; as a member of the lineage, she has as great an interest in their solidarity as they have and the physical replenishment and perpetuation of the lineage is of as much concern to her as to them. In relation to her lineage siblings, sexual gratification as a source of pleasure is distinguished from the reproductive function. In terms of the latter she is identified with the lineage as a whole. The common interest a woman's agnates have in her as a woman is in her reproductive powers being placed at the service of another genealogical group in return for the bride-price, and not, as in the case of a wife, in her reproductive powers serving the interests of their own group.[1] If a man desires his sister or daughter sexually it must be a matter of mere lust (*kərih*), a foolish impulse, and not an expression of his desire for progeny as a socially mature adult. The gratification of lust, contemptible as it is in these circumstances, does not shatter the moral unity or injure the common interests of the lineage as does the usurpation of procreative rights over a wife. It does not, like the latter, destroy a father's authority over his son or a son's filial piety towards his father; for though it is a perversion of the social role of father or brother, it is not a usurpation of critical rights.

835 613 What has been said of the nuclear lineage applies in only slightly lesser degree to the inner lineage—the widest corporate unit responsibly

[1] Cf. p. 250 below.

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concerned with the marriages of its members. Beyond the range of the inner lineage but within that of the medial lineage there is some doubt as to whether intercourse with a woman member is incestuous or not.[1] Feeling varies according to the span of the unit and the number of segments it includes. Beyond the range of the medial lineage it is not uncommon for men to have affairs with women of their own maximal lineage or clan. The attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter is stretched to the point of complete tolerance. Sexual relations with a distant clan-sister (*pɔyayabəlɔg*) do not clash with the habits, morals, and organization of family life nor with those of lineage or clan relationships. Indeed, the structure of the society practically compels a man who wants a lover (*gab*) to seek for one among his own clanswomen. Any woman not genealogically related to him is someone he is allowed to marry. His sexual interest in her is an interest in her for the sake of offspring. The Tallensi attach so much importance to marriage that they think it absurd and despicable for a man to desire only a sexual liaison with a woman he can legitimately marry. Owing to this and to their tacit appreciation of the critical function of the sexual relationship in marriage, they have the utmost scorn for anyone who tries to seduce a girl he is courting. One of the strictest points of the etiquette of courtship is that the man must make no sexual advances to the girl; inquiries prove beyond doubt that it is extremely rare for courting couples to break this rule. For, apart from etiquette, it would also be an infringement of the taboo against a man's having sexual intercourse with a woman of his father-in-law's—or potential father-in-law's—clan in the latter's settlement.

A distant clanswoman is in a different position. One cannot marry her, but at the same time she is not so closely identified with one or so familiar as a sister. She is not felt to belong to oneself as one's sister or daughter is. Her genealogical and social identification with one's clan seems to be merely a formal usage and this is enhanced by the knowledge that she will marry out. She is the unmarriageable stranger. One can desire her and enjoy her for sexual gratification without an interest in her reproductive powers and without prejudice to her later legitimate marriage. A girl's clan-brother lover is often the most influential go-between in her courtship. Sexual intercourse with a married clanswoman is, of course, adultery from her husband's point of view. It may create trouble between her husband's inner lineage and her own. The head of her inner lineage will demand apologies from the head of her lover's inner lineage and may insist on a ritual reconciliation. There will also have to be a ritual reconciliation between the adulterer and the woman's husband's lineage. Cases of adultery very often take this form and that is one reason why husbands do not like young wives to stay long at their parents' homes.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 204.

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606 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman, anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house. Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-in-law's wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settlement. If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I have never heard of a case.

835 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before, if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations. So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particularly within the limits of the medial lineage. A man may not even meet his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his, if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

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783 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the prohibition against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done, disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited by the offending husband.

584 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

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835 626 Finally, the prohibition of sexual relations between father and daughter or brother and sister in the expanded family also links up with this complex. Tallensi say that if a man's daughter becomes pregnant before marriage he will hasten to marry her off as soon as possible, if she does not elope with a suitor of her own accord. A man once told me that people do this for fear that it might be said of them, 'Oh, so-and-so is not marrying his daughter off because he wants to keep her for a wife for himself'. I do not know if this statement accurately represents the way men feel the pressure of public opinion in cases of this sort; but it is an accurate indication of the feeling that a woman's procreative powers are out of place in her father's home and belong properly to her husband's home.

The Adjustment of Co-Wives to One Another

595 We have still to consider one of the main problems of adjustment that face a woman in her husband's family, her relations with her co-wives (*nentaa*, pl. *nentaas*). These include both her husband's other wives and his brothers' wives. A woman refers to a co-wife as 'younger (or older) sibling of the same sex (*pit* or *bier*)', and addresses her by her clan sobriquet, e.g. Namooga. A woman's children describe her co-wives as 'mother' (*ma*), with the suffix *pit* or *bier* according as she is junior or senior to their own mother, and address her as 'mother of such-and-such a clan', e.g. *ma Namooga*.

Women do not, as a rule, object to their husbands having other wives as well. Indeed, it often happens that a monogamist's wife presses him to marry again so that there should be someone to share the work of the household with her, or even takes the initiative in finding another wife for him. It is quite common for women to bring younger clan sisters, or a brother's daughter, a sister's daughter, or a daughter of a mother's brother's lineage, to live with them with a view to their eventually marrying their husbands or husbands' brothers. From such marriages spring cognatically related matri-segments of a lineage, with a special link through their progenitrices in addition to their agnatic ties.

Through this custom of fetching in (*pie na*) a kinswoman-wife (*poŋasoog*) one often finds women related by kinship married into the same joint family or the same expanded family. But this is not a preferential marriage. It is due simply to the inertia of kinship. A woman who wants to bring a girl into her husband's house usually does so because she has need of someone to help her with the care of an infant or because she is ill or elderly and has no daughter or daughter-in-law to relieve her of the heaviest domestic tasks. And she looks naturally to her kinsfolk, upon whom she has claims by right of birth, to provide her with a suitable girl. Again, though the Tallensi do not like two full or half-sisters to marry the same man or to marry into the same joint family, it is not a taboo. A man who particularly likes his son-in-law and his people

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593 578 best is this. A 12-year-old is conscious of his seniority (*kpɛmɔt*) in relation to his younger siblings. He orders them about and pulls them up if they are not behaving properly. But whereas he would not hesitate for a moment to smack a younger *soog*, he will not go further than scolding a younger half-sibling for the same offence. Tallensi say that if you strike your younger *soog* it does not matter; your mother or your father may rebuke you afterwards and the affair is forgotten. But if you strike a half-sibling—even if the child has behaved so disgracefully that public opinion will be on your side—you cause friction in the family. The child's mother gets annoyed with you and with your mother and quarrels arise.

593 835 There is another interesting indication of this. As has been previously mentioned, Tallensi do not designate incest between brother and sister as sinful. When they say it is forbidden (*kih*), as they sometimes do, they mean it rather in the sense that it is disgraceful, scandalous, and unnatural than in the narrower ritual sense. If they are asked why then it is so uncommon, considering the many opportunities and temptations that surely offer, they explain it by the intimacy of siblings in childhood and adolescence. They deny that the temptation exists. 'Look', said Sinkawol, arguing this point with me, 'my sister, is she not marriageable? And here am I, however attractive she is, I do not even notice it; I am never aware that she has a vagina; she is just my sister and someone will one day come and marry her and I will give her to him and get my cows. You and your sister grow up together, you quarrel and make it up, how can you desire to have intercourse with her?' This is a stock argument with the Tallensi.

593 864 At the same time the natives are the first to point out that sexual play in childhood generally begins with a classificatory sibling. Family play is a regular thing in the under-8 play-groups; and the final realistic touch is for the 'husband' and 'wife' to pretend to have coitus. This is common knowledge, and adults laugh at it. A standing joke is to tease a small boy about his so-called sweethearts. As we have seen, Tallensi say that small children 'have no sense (*ka yam*)', and therefore it is not a breach of propriety or morals for them to play at coitus with a sibling. Every man I questioned on the subject told me, with a grin of amusement, that his first sweetheart was a 'sister', sometimes of the same expanded family, more often of the same inner or medial lineage. 'We were very small and didn't know better', they said.

But Tallensi maintain stoutly that even small boys of 6 or 7 do not play at coitus with their *soog* sisters or half-sisters. There are exceptions, of course, they readily admit. There are stupid children, precocious children, and badly brought up children. Among such children instances of brothers copulating with sisters are bound to occur. It has been known to happen even with adolescents, who are presumed to 'have sense'. If it is found out, the culprits are given a severe thrashing

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institutionalized co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies. The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan ycla*)' sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment, who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to *sunzɔp* is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations *qua* clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful, and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete. No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again, Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu boot taaba*).' To win a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.